

Purpose of the Cold Lake—Beaver River Water Management Plan Update

The Alberta Government approved the Cold Lake-Beaver River Water Management Plan in 1985. Since 1985, the region has experienced below-normal precipitation, increased industrial development, and population growth. The result is a need to assess the demands on this important water resource and update the 1985 Plan to meet current and future water needs within the basin.

The updated plan will provide a framework for Alberta Environment (AENV) decisions about the water resource under the *Water Act*, and, where appropriate, under the *Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act (EPEA)*.

STATUS, NEWS AND RECENT EVENTS

Open Houses gave us public input on the draft Terms of Reference.



Open houses held in March and April, 2003, in Bonnyville, Cold Lake, and Ardmore provided the project planners with feedback on the proposed planning process and intended objectives of the plan update. Public comments revolved around water quality and quantity concerns. Specifically, questions were raised about industry's water use practices and the potential impact on surface and groundwater quality and quantity. Other questions included clarification of the status of the 1985 plan recommendations, such as a water

pipeline from the North Saskatchewan River; disposal of contaminated water; and the need to prepare a water budget for the watershed to get a complete picture of water location, availability, and use.

A meeting was also held with representatives from three lake associations (Marie, Muriel, and Crane lakes) to discuss the update process and how such associations can provide input. Similar lake associations that wish to be involved are encouraged to contact Bob Savage, the project manager, by dialing 310-0000, then 427-2267.

Terms of Reference finalized and approved

The information gathered during the public review has been used to complete the final *Terms of Reference* for the project, which received departmental approval in July, 2003. These *Terms of Reference* will now guide the update planning process.

Technical Teams up and running!

Four technical teams have been created to review, collect, and assess information to address specific management objectives. They are the *Groundwater Quality Team*, the *Groundwater Quantity Team*, the *Surface Water Quality Team*, and the *Surface Water Quantity and Aquatic Resources Team*. The *Groundwater Quality Team* will also address deepwater disposal, and the *Groundwater Quantity Team* will explore brackish water issues. Several of the teams have completed the summer field season work, and summaries of their studies are expected later this fall/winter.

Basin Advisory Committee

The Basin Advisory Committee (BAC) is made up of representatives from local municipalities, LICA, and the local Métis and Aboriginal community. The BAC held its first meeting in June, and has since completed a tour of several portions of the study area. The BAC will work with



Cold Lake Basin Advisory Committee Tour June 25, 2003

area stakeholders and the project team to review information provided by the technical teams, and provide advice to Alberta Environment about management direction and the recommendations proposed in the new plan. One of the BAC's first roles is the completion of a membership review to ensure adequate and effective local representation. The BAC and AENV will also ensure that plan recommendations are compatible with the recently-announced *Water Strategy for Alberta*.

Public input opportunities

Concerned individuals can provide input throughout the planning process to members of the planning team and the BAC. In addition, scheduled opportunities to provide input into the draft plan will be provided, as well as stakeholder forums to review the analyses and recommendations from the technical teams.

Next steps...

The Basin Advisory Committee will continue to meet, establishing protocols for decision-making and membership representation. The Technical Teams will go forward with their reviews, and share their results with AENV, the BAC, and interested stakeholders. Individuals are invited to contact AENV planners or LICA at any time for information or to provide input.

CONTACTS

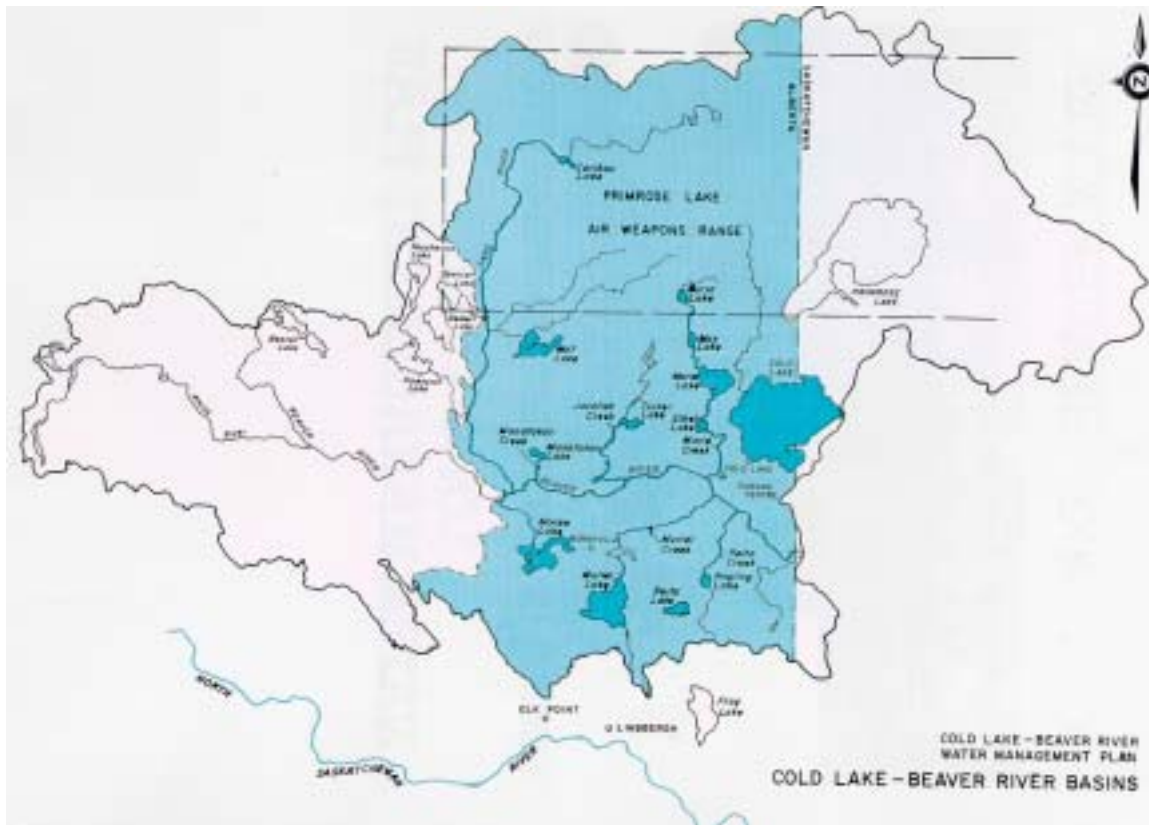
For more information on the Cold Lake-Beaver River Plan Update, please contact Bob Savage of Alberta Environment by dialing 310-0000, then 427-2267, or by email at Robert.Savage@gov.ab.ca

The approved *Terms of Reference*, *Planners Updates*, and additional information will be posted on AENV's website at www.gov.ab.ca/env (and select the water link) and on LICA's website at www.lica.ca.

Lakeland Industry and Community Association (LICA)

LICA, which is jointly funding the project and leading some of the Technical Team work, is a local contact for input to the plan. Anyone with concerns, ideas, or questions is invited to call (780-812-2182, toll-free: 1-877-737-2182) or drop by the office at 5006 – 50 Avenue in Bonnyville. You can also contact LICA by Fax (780-812-2016) or e-mail (lica2@lica.ca). Additional copies of the *Terms of Reference* are available at the LICA office.

Planning Area



The Cold Lake – Beaver River planning area is part of the Cold Lake River Basin located in Alberta that drains to the outlet of Cold Lake. It also includes the lower Beaver River basin that drains to the Alberta /Saskatchewan boundary. This was the area used in the original 1985 plan.